

### **REMARKS**

The present Amendment amends claims 23-27, 29 and 30, leaves claim 31 unchanged and cancels claims 21, 22 and 28. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 21-27 and 29-31.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication in the Office Action that claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Amendments were made to claim 23 to place it in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claim 23 is allowable as indicated by the Examiner.

It should be noted that claims 26 and 30 were amended to contain features similar to that recited in claim 23. Thus, claims 26 and 30 are allowable over the prior art of record for the same reasons as the allowable claim 23.

Claims 21, 22 and 24-31 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being unpatentable over Tanaka (U.S. Patent No. 5,881,037). As indicated above, claims 21, 22 and 28 were canceled. Therefore, this rejection with respect to claims 21, 22 and 28 is rendered moot. This rejection with respect to the remaining claims 24-27 and 29-31 is also rendered moot for the following reasons.

Applicants submit that claims 24 and 25 were amended to depend from claim 23, claims 26 and 30 were amended to contain features similar to that recited in claim 23, and claim 29 was amended to depend from claim 26. Claims 27 and 31 already depend from claims 26 and 30, respectively.

Since claims 24 and 25 were amended to depend from claim 23, claims 26 and 30 were amended to contain features similar to that recited in claim 23, claim 29 was amended to depend from claim 26 and claims 27 and 31 already depend from claims 26 and 30, respectively, said claims now depend from allowable base claims and as such are allowable over the prior art of record for the same reasons as the allowable base claims.

The remaining references of record have been studied. Applicants submit that they do not supply any of the deficiencies noted above with respect to the reference utilized in the rejection of claims 21, 22 and 24-31.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication in the Office Action that claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Amendments were made to claim 23 to place it in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claim 23 is allowable as indicated by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that claims 23-31 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 23-31 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (520.36525CX2).

Respectfully submitted,

MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C.



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Carl I. Brundidge  
Registration No. 29,621

CIB/jdc  
(703) 684-1120